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ABSTRACT

A three-part study of the forms of rhetorical criticism is offered. Part one reviews the nature of genre criticism, enumerates several concepts of form and the types of genre criticism they produce, and discusses the implications of this relationship between form and genre. Part two is an essay on the methodological implications of form-grounded genre studies, addressing the nature of judgment for the genre critic, the role of argument in generic studies, and the criteria by which critics evaluate the evidence concerning specific forms of persuasive discourse. Part three is a topical bibliography, presenting resources concerned with genre in the arts: the philosophy of form: rhetoric and genre; and 12 categories of genre studies (American, apology, concession/withdrawal, crisis/confrontation, eulogy, the inaugural address, politics, religion, science, war, women's liberation, and miscellaneous topics). (RL)

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THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF GENRE CRITICISM

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March 18, 1980

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PART I:

GENRE CRITICISM: THE ANALYSIS OF FORM

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If there is any issue upon which rhetorical critics have come to agree, it is that there is no single, uniquely appropriate method by which they should practice their craft.[1] Indeed, the late 1960's and 1970's have witnessed what Campbell and Jamieson call an "explosion of unconventional critical essays" in our field.[2] A survey of this literature reveals that genre criticism is one of the most prevalent and one of the most diffuse of these new methodologies.[3] The central argument of this essay will be that all notions of "genre" should be rooted in a concept of "form," and that an analysis of various definitions of "form" will allow evaluation of the usefulness of different varieties of genre criticism. The study will begin with a review of the nature of genre criticism and the dispute over its merits. The analysis will then proceed to an enumeration of several concepts of "form" and the types of genre criticism which are produced by each concept. Finally, the implications of the relationship between "form" and "genre" will be discussed. The ultimate goals of this inquiry are: (1) to review basic issues surrounding the nature, scope, and function of genre criticism, and (2) to suggest refinements or extensions of the method by probing the nature of form-grounded genres.

GENRE CRITICISM: BASIC ISSUES

One of the chief difficulties in conducting any analysis of generic inquiry is locating a useful definition of the term "genre." This problem originates in the fact that contemporary

rhetorical scholars have, to a large degree, borrowed their notions of "genre" from other fields. Perhaps most important in this regard is our profession's use of literary conceptions of genre (a la Northrup Frye), and the persistent burglary of major categories of thought from the other liberal arts (e.g., "political rhetoric, social rhetoric, religious rhetoric, etc.").[4] The difficulty with this collection of purloined critical tools is that the fields from which our present notions of "genre" are drawn have often had little success in defining the term themselves. This problem is most apparent in the areas of literature and art.[5] As a result, the generic approaches currently employed by rhetorical critics are extremely diffuse. Indeed, the term "genre" is itself used in a wide variety of ways, including definitions grounded in speaking occasion, ethnicity of the speaker, ideology of the speaker, strategies in the discourse, historical period of the discourse, geographic location, intended effect, and any number of permutations of the above.[6] It seems, as Harrell and Linkugel argue, that "taken together, these studies offer no clear picture of what genre is or what methods should be employed by the generic critic . . . 'generic' seems to be loosely taken to mean 'classificatory,' and little has yet emerged to organize and systematize the development of generic criticism."[7] Perhaps the clearest manifestation of the current state of genre criticism is the recent statements of several critics to the effect that there simply are <u>no rules</u> of inquiry dictated by a generic perspective.[8] Thus, it appears that generic inquiry is in quite a state of disarray.[9]

This diffusion of technique creates a need for a synthetic definition of "genre" which is broad enough to incorporate many of its various applications while being narrow enough to provide useful insights. In literary criticism, the study of defining genres owes its popularity in large measure to the work of Northrup Frye.[10] In rhetorical criticism, this role was played by Edwin Black's 1965 book Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method.[11] Black's argument was that types of discourse (of which there are a limited number, owing to the finite number of rhetorical situations, rhetorical responses, and historical precedents) could be located at arbitrary points on a continuum reflecting the "intensity of conviction each promoted in audiences."[12]

Black's work is important, however, it would be erroneous to think that the roots of a synthetic definition of genre must be sought in a time no more distant than 1965. In fact, rhetorical scholars since the ancients have been interested in the possibility of classifying discourse in a useful way; as Mohrmann and Leff explain, "the dominant position in ancient rhetoric is not that situations are unique and particular, but that they fall into general categories, into 'types' or 'kinds.' The influence of Aristotle is decisive. He describes the three familiar genres of deliberative, forensic, and epideictic, maintaining that 'rhetoric falls into three divisions (genē), determined by the three classes of listeners to speeches.'"[13] This type of theory was perpetuated by scholars such as Cicero and Quintilian and is still very much in evidence today.[14]

Modern manifestations of the urge to classify include a wide range of studies entitled "the rhetoric of . . ." (e.g.,

Black Power, Women's Liberation, Science, the New Left, war, etc.). After a review of many examples of these genre studies, Campbell and Jamieson posit "certain noteworthy constraints" which can apply to all of them:

> 1) Classification is justified only by the critical illumination it produces not by the neatness of a classificatory schema; 2) Generic criticism is taken as a means toward a systematic, close textual analysis; 3) A genre is a complex, an amalgam, a constellation of substantive, situational, and stylistic elements; 4) Generic analysis reveals both the conventions and affinities that a work shares with others; it uncovers the unique elements in the rhetorical act, the particular means by which a genre is individuated in a given case.[15]

From this review it becomes apparent that, basically, a "genre" is a class of things.[16] Following this notion, Harrell and Linkugel go on to argue that "the decision to classify a particular group of things as a genus rests on recorded observations which indicate that one group of entities shares some important characteristic which differentiates it from other entities . . . the classification and analysis of an entity in one genus does not prevent its inclusion in other appropriate groupings."[17] When translated into more specifically rhetorical terms, the "characteristics" by which one categorizes "entities" are patterns in the practice of discourse. Simons articulates this perspective when he defines a "rhetorical genre" as "any distinctive and recurring pattern in rhetorical practice. 'Rhetorical practice' is defined as any discourse or symbolic act designed to influence others (i.e., secure preferred outcomes) by modifying their beliefs, values, or attitudes."[18] Thus, genre criticism

is systematic inquiry into these "pattern/s/ in rhetorical practice" for purposes of gaining insight into discourse via definition of genus and analysis of its fundamental qualities.

How, then, is genre criticism to be practiced and what are the potential benefits afforded the critic? In his discussion of "Theory-Building and Rhetorical Criticism," Roderick Hart has noted three primary types of genre critique currently in use. These approaches "characterize rhetorical transactions by: (1) Space-time setting--For example Aristotle's forensic, epideictic, and deliberative typologies, as well as the contemporary disignators of lecturing, preaching, political conventioneering, and so forth. (2) Rhetorical purpose--That is, speeches to inform, to agitate, to convince . . . (3) Ideational thrust--Perhaps the most common, contemporary method of isolating speech types, this approach results in such designations as the rhetoric of Black Power . . ."[19] However, while Hart's schema tells one the categories into which the products of genre criticism fall, it does not shed much light on the method by which such inquiry is to be conducted. Perhaps the reason for this emphasis on the finished product is that there really are no fixed rules for generic analysis (in the sense that neo-aristotelian criticism of 1940-1965 was strictly rule-governed).[20] Surveying the literature of genre critics one finds procedures ranging from the laborious word counting of content analysis to near-mystical attempts to assess the phenomenological significance of "archetypal metaphors."[21]

Given this diversity, the only realistic way to describe the generic method is to define categories of procedures which the critic would most likely utilize. Harrell and Linkugel have

suggested three such categories: (1) "Generic description"--This process involves the "mapping" of the normative factors within the genre and identification of its "motivational precedents; for example, Richard Hofstadter's discussion of the "Paranoid Style."[22] (2) "Generic Participation"--At this stage the critic determines which examples of discourse fit within the genre by testing the example against the generic definition; for example, Zyskind's study of the deliberative categorization of the Gettysburg Address.[23] (3) "Generic Application"--This is the process we normally "think of as criticism" wherein the critic applies the factors in the generic definition to the discourse to attain insight; for example, Harrell, Ware and Linkugel's use of political systems theory in their study of the Nixon Watergate apologia.[24] If one can assume that these three stages represent some of the basic moves of the genre critic, the question becomes, why do genre criticism?

There are three arguments at the heart of the rationale for the analysis of rhetorical genus: (1) Genre criticism uses the classification of discourse (by location of central characteristics) as a way of successfully illuminating the "internal dynamics" of rhetoric. This argument is premised on the belief that categorization for its own sake is both useless and potentially detrimental to real criticism. The only rationale for classification is clarification.[25] Through the analysis of classifying qualities, rhetorical "types" are located, the speaker's resources are analyzed, the constraints and expectations of audiences are clarified, and discourse can be appreciated or judged by comparison with other members of the genre.[26] As a result of this fusion

of characteristics into a "synthetic core," critics have what Campbell and Jamieson call "an angle of vision, a window that reveals the tension among these elements, the dynamic within the rhetorical acts of human beings, in different times and places, responding in similar ways as they attempt to encompass certain rhetorical problems . . ."[27]

(2) Proponents of genre criticism also argue that the method provides special insights into the nature of audiences while simultaneously creating intrinsic standards for critical judgment. As Mohrmann and Leff explain: "Predicated upon the 'expectations of the audience and the demands of the situation,' the concept of genre assumes that certain types of situations provoke similar needs and expectations among audiences. Identifying and categorizing these situations are basic to inquiry, and the critic must uncover patterns of need and expectation that bind audiences together, even though they may be far removed in time and place. An adequate description of a genre, then, produces a general index of audience demands; it, therefore, locates the abstract rhetorical problems confronting the speaker and points to intrinsic standards for judging a particular kind of discourse."[28] According to its supporters, then, the study of genres can provide unique historical and rhetorical insights into audience behavior that transcend the reaction of a group of listeners to a speech.[29]

(3) The value of generic methods in the long-term analysis of audience suggests an additional justification: genre criticism has great potential for building rhetorical theory. Perspectives on this argument range from Simons' plea for "a science of rhetorical genres" employing statistical procedures (or at least

scientific principles) to Bormann's insistence on a humanistic theory of genre.[30] However, regardless of their viewpoint on the appropriate format for theory, genre critics seem to agree that their method has the organizational and explanatory power to be a significant contributor to the construction of theories of rhetoric. Hart summarizes the position: "The implications of generic studies for the theory-building rhetorical critic seem clear. Following Black's lead, we might well attend to rhetorical systems which perseverate, for in such perseverations lie the glimmerings of rhetorical genres, and in such rhetorical genres lie the building blocks of theory necessary to explain the over-arching forms which rhetoric-in-general takes in everyday public life. By focusing on archetypal or paradigmatic rhetorical transactions, the critic might well bite off a theoretical piece of what Wayne Both has termed a knowledge most worth having."[31] For those committed to a generic approach, then, the hope is that categorization of discourse will eventually lead to theoretically provocative classification of symbolic acts. However, there is another side to this and the other rationales for the generic perspective.

Those who oppose extensive use of genre criticism make a three-fold case:

(1) Criticisms of the generic view often argue that generic classification tends to be either "too loose" or "too tight." In the former case the definitions of the genre are so imprecise that the resulting "conceptual slippage" makes it difficult to realize useful insights from its application and also makes it nearly impossible for other researchers to identify the genre in the same way.[32] In the latter case the "neatness"

of the system of generic classification becomes such an end in itself that it blinds the critic to any real appreciation of the object of study. Rosenfield has described this type of critic as possessing the "mentality . . . of the mail room clerk sorting parcels into pre-established, discrete, empty bins . . . he would be wrong to equate such hollow data processing with thinking, let alone experiencing anything."[33] This critique assumes some sort of trade-off between the "neatness" or "tightness" of a critical model and its ability to enlighten. William Righter refers to this principle as a "law of diminishing returns by which the more neatly a model fits the subject matter, the less exciting and illuminating it is."[34] In one sense, it is unclear whether these positions indict genre criticism per se or merely inept genre critics. However, it is also apparent that those wishing to utilize this method in the future will have to take steps to insure that their humanism does not neglect formal rigor and that their "science" does not neglect the intellectual appreciation that constitutes the critical attitude.

(2) The next major critique of the genre perspective focuses on the tendency of generic scholars to define classes of discourse according to situational factors. Based on Lloyd Bitzer's concept of the "rhetorical situation," this segment of the genre literature derives categories of rhetoric by analyzing the elements of the situation in which symbolic acts occur and by assessing the impact of antecedent reactions to similar situations.[35] Critics of this view contend that it is very difficult to produce a definition of "situation" that is precise enough to be useful to more than one inquirer at a time. In addition, opponents of situational theory

claim that Bitzer's view is essentially deterministic and thus overlooks the importance of purposeful speaker choice as well as the vagaries of speaker and audience perception.[36] Finally, some have questioned Bitzer's position on the grounds that it is not falsifiable, i.e., an appropriate rhetorical response to a situation supports the theory, but an inappropriate response cannot disprove it--the discourse is simple judged as being not fitting.[37] In this way, critics of the situational notion of rhetoric implicitly undercut the rationale for genre studies based on Bitzer's original model.[38]

(3) A final critique of genre analysis centers on the alleged inability of the method to contribute to theory construction. One school of thought on this issue holds that the art of criticism cannot (and should not) produce scientifically rigorous theoretical constructs.[39] However, beyond this argument from principle, there are also some practical questions on the theoretical value of conventional genre studies. Some of these issues were discussed by Hart: "It could be argued, for example, that no necessary relationship exists between when and where an utterance is made and the resulting characteristics of rhetoric produced under such constraints of space and time. It could also be established (and surely has been) that even though two speakers may have similar rhetorical intent, that the rhetoric they eventually produce may bear no or only faint resemblance. Furthermore, it seems that the 'rhetorics' (that is, rhetorical genres) of women's liberation and black activism are not rhetorics at all, but more appropriately might be termed dialectics, since only idea and topic--which are but two of many rhetorical variables--are shared significantly by

representatives of such rhetorical classes in many cases."[40] Thus, when viewed through what Hart terms "the highly conservative lenses of theory construction," genre criticism can be made to appear of little value to theoreticians.[41] Perhaps all of these criticisms of generic study are best summarized by Donald Bryant's succinct verdict: "genre criticism at best has limited usefulness."[42]

While this listing of arguments pro and con is hardly comprehensive, it does point to some of the basic controversies extant in the literature of generic criticism. The source of much of this dispute (and a major difficulty in generic studies) is the absence of any attempt to define a useful notion of "form" as the grounding of genre inquiry. The present study will not endeavor to posit a universally applicable definition of "form." Rather, several possible conceptions of "form" will be reviewed in order to delineate the types of genre criticism which are a consequent of each notion. Hopefully, such a procedure will clarify the relationship between form and genre, and will lay the groundwork for several refinements in generic study to be suggested in the concluding portion of the essay.

GENRE AND FORM

One reason for the vagueness that is apparent in any definition of "genre" is that such conceptualizations often lack analytical or empirical grounding. Most of these definitions simply assume the existence of regularities in discourse and exhort the critic to go forth and find them. However, this procedure leaves certain basic questions unanswered: Why are there regularities in human symbolic acts? Can these regularities be generalized

beyond limited samples of discourse, e.g., across cultures? Are such regularities actually contained in rhetoric, or are they invented in the minds of audiences, or are they simply imposed on discourse by critics? etc. The central argument of the present study is that an understanding of the many aspects of "form" can provide meaningful insights into such fundamental questions and thus contribute to the sophistication of generic inquiry.

The major premise of this position is that some notion of form is essential to a complete understanding of what genre critics do. The importance of form to the art of criticism per se was pointed out by Campbell and Jamieson: "forms are central to all types of criticism because they define the unique qualities of any rhetorical act, and because they are the means through which we come to understand how an act works to achieve its end."[43] This notion gains even more significance in the area of genre criticism because genre, by its nature, must be rooted in form. The centrality of this relationship has long been accepted in literature and art.[44] However, rhetorical critics have been slow to appreciate the importance of this relation.[45] Those who do appreciate the connection between form and genre realize that the maximization of genre criticism's potential contribution requires a thorough consideration of formal issues. Edwin Black states the relationship in these terms:

> You will recall that in Plato, dialectical inquiry concerning the nature of Form led, when it was successful, to a definition composed of a Collection and Division. The terms "genre" and "form" have the same relationship to one another as do the Collection and Division of Platonic dialectic. That is, the genre of a

> thing is its class--a statement of its relationship to all other commensurable things. The form of that thing is its inherent structure--a statement of its constituents and their relationships to one another. Genre refers to the place of the thing in the universe and to its generation as an adaptive and relational entity. Form refers to the constitution and individuality of the thing and to its formation as an entity sufficiently autonomous to be identifiable. Taken together, the words "genre" and "form" are complementary in that "genre" refers to external relationships and "form" refers to internal relationships.[46]

While this Platonic notion is only one of many possible interpretations, Black's comments do illustrate the significance of the form-genre relation for the critic of rhetorical types. The question becomes, then, how are various concepts of form linked to genre procedures?

Before addressing this question directly, it is necessary to construct some frame of reference, some context in which the many definitions of form can be related to each other. Following the work of Stephen C. Pepper, Harrell and Linkugel have suggested that different types of genre criticism can be arranged on a continuum ranging from "Immanent classification," that which requires only common-sense empirical perception of similarities between entities; to "Transcendent classification," that which seeks out norms in entities, i.e., "central tendencies which are analytically derived, not inferred from surface observation" and which transcend any individual object.[47] This continuum is consistent with Burke's position that "there are two general bases of critical exhortation. (1) We may have a concept of an ideal situation, and insist that literature be written in accordance

with this ideal situation; or (2) we may have a concept of a contemporary situation, and insist that literature be written in accordance with this contemporary situation. The first method is absolutist . . . The second method is relativistic."[48] Burke's absolutist critic would practice "transcendent classification," while his "relativistic" critic would tend more toward "immanent classification." Although it seems that the Harrell and Linkugel formulation fits nicely with the thinking of both philosophers and critics, there is a great irony here. While the authors treat Pepper's notions of the "transcendent" and the "immanent" as types of criticism, Pepper's original thinking treats these notions as types of form. What Harrell and Linkugel refer to as "transcendent classification" and immanent classification," Pepper terms "transcendent formism" and "immanent formism."[49] It appears, then, that the relationship between form and genre is viewed as being so close that genre critics feel free to use the terms interchangeably. However, the exposition of the relation should clarify the necessity for treating form as the grounding of genre, rather than as a pseudo-philosophical synonym for it. In order to provide such clarification, the delineation of various notions of form and genre is in order.[50]

(1) Form as pattern. This concept is located closest to the "immanent" end of the continuum and defines form as simple regularity or pattern of objective characteristics. Harrell and Linkugel would refer to genre criticism attendant to this notion as: (1) de facto, e.g., the critic could recognize a commencement

address without ever seeing it simply by being told it was given at a graduation ceremony, or (2) structural, i.e., the critic would assess language patterns (e.g., the five parts of the Puritan sermon) or wording strategies (e.g., god and devil terms).[51] Examples of this type of generic criticism would be descriptive content analyses of speeches[52] and classification of patterns of strategy or argument in discourse.[53] Thomas Clark illustrated the essence of this type of criticism after both qualitative and quantitative comparison of 15 Protestant sermons with two "control groups" of other types of speeches: "The above trends describe patterns of discourse; they do not dictate rhetorical form, the way a sonnet, for example, dictates poetic form. From the data gathered in this study, one can at best talk about central rhetorical tendencies found in sermons."[54] It would be more accurate to state that Clark's study may not speak to a normative concept of form, but it does evince a notion of form as pattern or regularity.[55]

(2) Form as motive. A motivational view of form conceives the central qualities of discourse as rooted in the intentions of the speaker. Based on Walter Fisher's "motive view" of communication, Harrell and Linkugel relate four types of speeches which illustrate this perspective on form: (1) Affirmation: wherein the speaker seeks to persuade a potential believer to "adopt a new idea"; (2) Reaffirmation: wherein the speaker tries to "revitalize" an idea already held by the audience; (3) Purification: wherein the rhetor attempts to refine an idea or image that is under attack or is deteriorating; and, (4) Subversion: wherein the orator seeks "to weaken or destroy an ideology."[56]

Examples of discourse derived from motivational form might include the apologia (Purification),[57] the red-baiting of Senator McCarthy (Subversion),[58] Fourth of July addresses (Reaffirmation), and Woodrow Wilson's campaign for the League of Nations (Affirmation).[59] It should come as no surprise then that Harrell and Linkugel term genre criticism of such discourse "motivational classification" and locate it toward the transcendent end of their continuum.

However, this label does not make clear the reason why this critical approach should be deemed relatively transcendent. The assumption here is that form is somehow grounded in the psychology of the speaker. As such, critics must analyze the intentions of the rhetor (both spoken and unspoken) in hopes of discovering patterns of motivation, and cognate regularities in discourse, which are applicable to all orators within a culture. For example, if the drive toward self-defense when under attack constitutes a fundamental motive for public utterance, discovery of such a motive through analysis of discourse gives the genre critic a significant insight into one basic pattern of human message-making. Using a research hypothesis such as the self-defense principle, students of genre can then test other samples of discourse to see how often and in what configurations this principle emerges. The conclusions of such studies could afford meaningful illumination of a basic form in human thought and, more importantly, of the way in which symbols are used to express this form. Ultimately, theory construction or at least some pre-theoretical hypotheses may be produced.

(3) Form as situation. David Swanson accurately described the state of genre criticism when he wrote that, "although generic rhetorical critics have not taken great pains to specify what constitutes a form, most such critics appear to ground forms in rhetorical situations. Rhetorical situations, in turn, are often understood as comprised of a cluster of ingredients . . ."[60] However, it would not be correct to assume that critics are unanimous as to what constitutes a "situation." Bormann has noted three distinct interpretations of this term: (1) The elements comprising the speaking occasion directly constrain the rhetor via audience expectations and historical precedent; (2) A cyclical relationship exists in which the discourse and the setting in which it is given mutually influence each other; and, (3) The discourse shapes the social reality.[61]

Moreover, this micro view of what Bitzer calls the "complex of persons, events, objects, ... relations . . . /and/ actual or potential exigence" which comprise the "rhetorical situation,"[62] is paralleled by a macro perspective on the issue. This latter viewpoint defines entire cultures as encountering rhetorical problems, constituting mass audiences, and thus producing large-scale rhetorical situations.[63] Indeed, Gronbeck has argued that form inheres in such cultural structures. He defines the concept of form as "nothing more complicated than patterns of arrangement which are given rhetorical force by their habitual use and codifiability."[64] After relating the Burkeian notion of form, Gronbeck goes on to illustrate the importance of culture in this procedure:

> . . . if a public speaker first tells about something which happened in 1920, then about events in 1936, and next reviews some events in 1942, I am lead to conclude that a chronological pattern is being used. I also assume that the speaker wishes to leave me with impressions of either cyclical or periodic growth and development of ideas and institutions, because within western culture those are the sorts of conclusions best suited to a chronological form.[65]

Cultures teach such forms to their members in order to "standardize the reception of information and of evaluative reaction."[66]

The micro notion of situational form would produce a generic criticism that attempted to define each element in the "complex" that made up the situation and to determine if there was a correspondence between such elements and types of discourse occurring across space and time. An example of such criticism might be Pratt's analysis of three Presidential "crisis" speeches in which he concludes that a combination of setting and speaker characteristics produce strategic choices by such rhetors.[67] On the macro level, generic critics would examine symbolic acts systematically in order to locate what Gronbeck calls "socially learned . . . systems of cues or structures for guiding meaningfulness, . . . conventionalized patterns-for-thought."[68] Certainly, generic film criticism could border on this perspective in some cases.[69] However, rhetorical critics center their work on the way in which discourse operates, rather than purely on its aesthetic merits. In this role, critics can examine the ability of cultural forms, such as value systems, to shape discourse and audiences. One instance of such a procedure might be Chesebro's axiologically-grounded genre analysis of the clash of Establishment and

Counter-Culture in the late 1960's and early 1970's.[70] Thus, from either a micro or a macro perspective, critics of rhetorical genres can use a situational notion of form to attain significant illumination of the object of study.

(4) Form as "psychology of the audience." The concepts of situation delineated above seem to imply that certain regularities are consistently present in human cognition and behavior. Whether these patterns are inherent in the species, are socially learned, or are derived from some combination of nature and nurture, is an issue well beyond the scope of this essay.[71] Indeed, the explication of some productive notions of psychological form does not require a definitive resolution of this issue. For rhetorical notions of genre (especially among the Ancients) have been based largely on the assumption that people respond to discourse in consistent ways.[72] However, the question remains as to why audiences react in similar ways and thus provide rhetors with a degree of predictability necessary to the construction of successful appeals.[73] One answer to this query has been provided by Susanne Langer. In Philosophy in a New Key, Langer argues that "form" inheres in the human sensory apparatus:

> Out of this bedlam/of pure sensation/ our sense-organs must select certain predominant forms, if they are to make report of things and not mere dissolving sensa. The ear and the eye must have their logic--their "categories of understanding" if you like the Kantian idiom, or their "primary imagination" in Coleridge's version of the same concept . . . A tendency to organize the sensory field into groups and patterns of sense-data, to perceive forms rather than a flux of light-impressions, seems to be inherent in our receptor apparatus just as

> much as in the higher nervous centers with which we do arithmetic and logic. But this unconscious appreciation of forms is the primitive root of all abstraction, which in turn is the keynote of rationality . . . Mental life begins with our mere physiological constitution . . . . A mind that works primarily with meanings must have organs that supply it primarily with forms.[74]

It would seem, then, that Langer recognizes formal patterns in both sensory processes and in the higher-order cognitive procedures of the mind. The rhetorical implications of this latter notion of form have been developed in the writings of Kenneth Burke.

In Counter-Statement, Burke explains his concept of form as the "psychology of the audience."[75] He contends that "Form in literature is an arousing and fulfillment of desires. A work has form insofar as one part of it leads a reader to anticipate another part, to be gratified by the sequence."[76] Although Burke's treatment of form in this early work deals almost entirely with literature, his thinking has been adopted wholesale by many rhetorical critics. Exemplifying this tendency, Richard Gregg has observed that Burke's analysis of this subject is more complex than one might assume: "Burke's discussion of language constantly moves back and forth between the level of fundamental symbolic forming, where principles inherent in man's symbolic nature are constraining, and the level of purposeful manipulation of language forms, where considerable technical and artistic freedom may be exercised."[77] On both levels, that of perception and that of purpose, the Burkeian concept of form is premised on the belief that we are "driven by perfection," i.e., by the need to "round things out, to complete, to reach logical conclusions to provide

closure."[78] Carpenter summarizes the position in terms of rhetoric when he states that "insofar as a discourse leads readers to anticipate and then attain satisfying, imaginative closure, it has an instrumental and hence significant form."[79]

The relationship between definitions such as this one and the idea of rhetorical genres is clearest if cast in terms of Bruke's category of "conventional form."[80] In this category one finds what Burke calls "the appeal of form as form . . . Any form can be conventional, and be sought for itself--whether it be as complex as a Greek tragedy or as compact as a sonnet."[81] Forms of this variety draw on "categorical expectations" of the audience and gain their aesthetic and instrumental power through the arousal and fulfillment of those expectations.[82] Gregg provides examples of this idea:

> In progressive and repetitive form, expectancies are created during the interaction of an audience with a work. But the expectancies of conventional form are "categorical" expectations, and are usually present prior to interactions of audience and work . . . Ceremonial speaking occasions, such as Presidential Inaugural Addresses, create conventional forms and attendant expectancies over time. Perhaps the clearest case of conventional form occurs in ritual, where expectancies, fulfillments, and form join together in a correctness of procedure which promotes the continuance of certain motives and adherence to group norms for behaving and being.[83]

Once again, one finds the bifurcation of form into two categories: (1) strategic and dispositional (micro), and (2) fundamental and over-arching (Macro). However, both formal concepts depend on arousing and fulfilling patterns of expectation extant in the minds

of auditors through the manipulation of symbols.

Generic criticism from the perspective of Burkeian form is very close to the "transcendent" end of the Harrell-Linkugel continuum; in their parlance it would be "archetypal classification." The ambiguity of the label itself suggests the wide variety of generic studies that could be conducted under such a rubric. Examples could include criticism which is explicitly Burkeian in its terminology;[84] or studies of powerful primal forms, such as Osborn's critique of the "light-dark" family of "archetypal metaphors;"[85] or near-mythic analyses, such as Stelzner's description of the "quest" motif in Nixon's rhetoric.[86] In his study of the "sentimental style" in the oratory of Daniel Webster, Edwin Black has illustrated the general principle addressed by criticism based on the psychological notion of form:

> Groups of people become distinctive as groups sometimes by their habitual patterns of commitment--not by the beliefs they hold, but by the manner in which they hold them and give them expression. Such people do not necessarily share ideas; they share rather stylistic proclivities and the qualities of mental life by which those proclivities are tokens. Below the continuously mutable dialectic that shapes and reshapes our social actions, there are deeper constancies of consciousness. Their explication is essential to understanding the varieties of rhetorical experience.[87]

Genre critics of this bent are in search of these "constancies of consciousness" through the systematic and insightful analysis of discourse.

QUALIFICATIONS ON CATEGORIZING FORM

When considering any system which categorizes forms or generic methods it is important to avoid the reductionist tendency

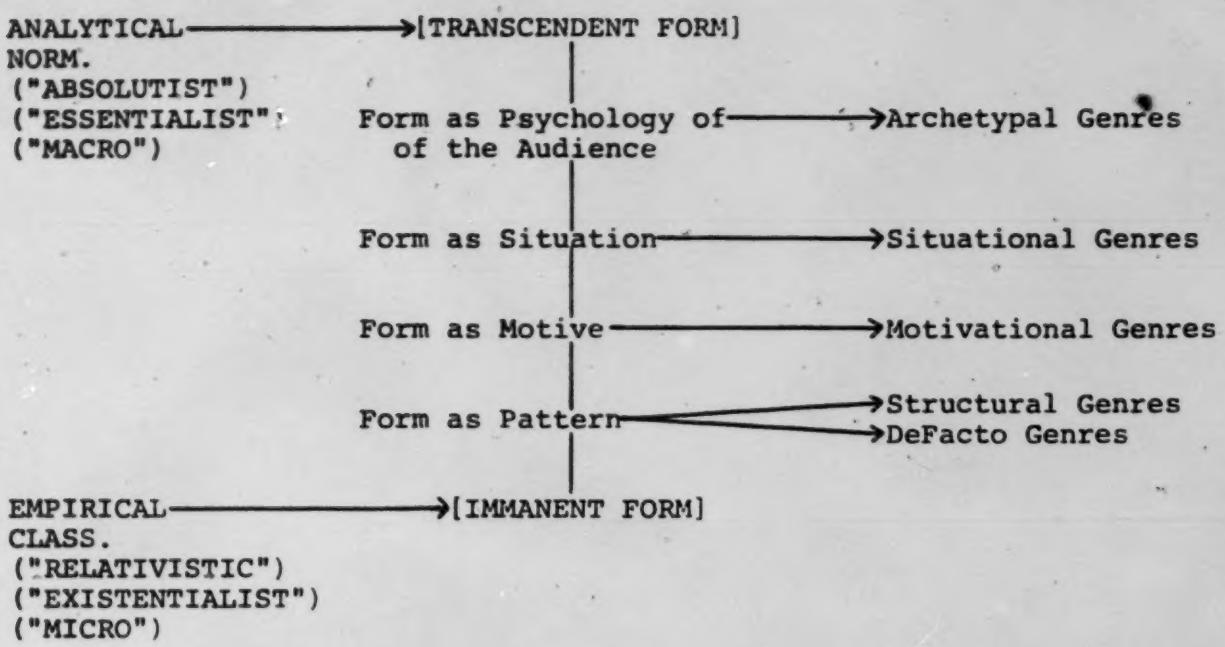
to contemplate forms or genres only as discrete, categorical entities. In actuality, genres often overlap. Examples of Aristotle's time-honored scheme of deliberative, forensic, and epideictic genres are seldom found in a pure form (e.g., a "purely" epideictic oration) and, in fact, may be much more useful to the critic if they are viewed as interacting.[88] This same statement could be made about forms themselves, e.g., one would be very likely to encounter strategic use of devil terms (a structural pattern) in conspiracy rhetoric (a manifestation of "paranoid" psychology). Moreover, for critics, form can be conceived of in a variety of ways in any given project.[89] Thus, when considering the "internal dynamic" of a type of discourse, investigators would be well advised to adopt an interactive view of form which conceives of its different varieties in relation to each other.[90]

A second caveat to a categorical view of form and genre centers on the instability of any discursive genus. Kathleen Jamieson has argued that rhetoric is so heavily constrained by its past that "rhetors . . . perceive unprecedented situations through antecedent genres, that the antecedent genres chosen may not be appropriate to the situation, that severe constraints are imposed on rhetor and audience once a generic antecedent is permitted to anchor response, and that the manacles of an inappropriate genre may be broken with varying degrees of difficulty."[91] In other writings Jamieson refers to this influence as arising from a sense of "the presentness of the past."[92] The problem with this view in isolation, however, is that it leads to a static conception of genres as being merely the products of their

own history. Jamieson has referred to marked consistency in discursive genus as "generic calcification" and goes on to point out that such genres are buffeted by the forces of "generic modification."[93] Rapid alteration in social structure, media, political ideals, technology, or any other of a variety of factors all work toward the "modification" of rhetorical genres by changing the nature of audiences, rhetors, issues, and channels of communication.[94] Jamieson concludes that "engulfed as we are by a society whose byword is change, the scarcity of calcified rhetorical genres should not surprise us."[95] Given this analysis, critics of generic discourse must beware of the tendency to treat genres as if they were carved in stone. Maximized insight requires a much more flexible perspective.

IMPLICATIONS OF CATEGORIZING FORMS

With the caveats noted above in mind, the treatment of form and genre in the present study suggests three ways of increasing the productivity of the generic method. First, for purposes of theoretical clarity, Harrell and Linkugel's continuum can be recast as a hierarchy of forms (and hence generic methods). The present review of various concepts of form and attendant methodologies makes it clear that, as one moves toward the "transcendent," both forms and genres tend to subsume their counterparts on the "immanent" end of the scale. The continuum, then, might be of greater value if it were re-formulated as a hierarchy:



The present formulation represents a significant advance of the Harrell-Linkugel continuum for two reasons: (1) While the continuum illustrates the orientation of types of criticism to two abstract polar terms, the hierarchical arrangement clarifies the relationship of notions of form and genre to each other while retaining the explanatory power of the continuum. The rationale for this claim is quite simple: while one could employ content analysis techniques as part of a study of archetypal characteristics of discourse (e.g., counting terms with "dark" or "light" connotations), it is doubtful that a computer could be programmed to illuminate "constancies of consciousness." Thus, more transcendent notions of form and genre tend to subsume those concepts clustering around the immanent end of the scale; hence, a hierarchical configuration seems to afford a substantial new insight into these relationships. (2) The hierarchy is centered around the notion form with genre criticism viewed as a consequent thereof. As

such, this formulation is more faithful to the original thinking of Pepper (on whose work the terminology is based) while at the same time affording the enhanced insight specified previously.

The categorization of form presented in the present study also suggests a refinement of generic methods: critics must be explicit in the treatment of their assumptions about "form." Such straightforwardness will become increasingly important as rhetorical critics endeavor to improve their art and to reach a wider audience in the 1980's.[96] Of primary significance in this regard is the need to differentiate various types of form that the critic intends to treat. Edwin Black illustrates this procedure when he states that "when one talks of significant form in rhetorical criticism, the usual referent for that phrase consists of recurrent and abstractable patterns in discourse. That is a necessary, an indispensible construal. But there is, I submit, yet another locus of form that solicits our attention. It is more elusive and problematic than discursive form because it is not directly observable, but its exploration may represent an ultimate humanistic fulfillment of rhetorical criticism. The form to which I refer is the form of consciousness affected and manifested in the symbolic currency of rhetorical transactions."[97] This distinction between micro and macro notions of form is important not only to the precision of the critical endeavor, but to the very process of setting objectives for criticism. For example, if one conducts a content analysis of a series of orations but conceives of form (for purposes of the study) as a "constancy of consciousness," it is doubtless that the results will be deemed trivial. Such confusion could be responsible for many of

the allegations that generic classification is a non-rigorous means of producing unimportant results. Alternatively, precise definitions of key formal assumptions would inform a critical method of much greater credibility.[98] Indeed, Black has told us that we evaluate the merits of criticism according to the singularity of insight provided by procedure marked by "skills so integrally mastered that they are exercised with the grace of full possession."[99] Singular, graceful illumination is no small task. If generic critics are to approach this goal, they must spell out their notion of form in order to clarify their theoretical assumptions, the grounding for and abilities of the method they employ, and the proper standards by which their results should be evaluated.

A final implication of the categorical schema of forms concerns the role of genre criticism in historical analysis. If one is to approach such studies from a rhetorical perspective, one must assume, as Bormann does, that "what the critic seeks to do in addition to the historical function is to evaluate the significant rhetorical form according to some criteria of a rhetorical nature."[100] However, many of the treatments of historical genres have not sought to develop any coherent perspective whereby samples of discourse can be related to each other. The desirability of developing a long-term explanatory structure for characterizing rhetorical acts is argued strongly in Campbell and Jamieson's plea for the writing of a "developmental history" of rhetoric focusing on the evolution of major forms.[101] Indeed, Bormann has pointed out that "the question of recurring form in rhetorical criticism is part of the broader question of generalization in

history."[102] In keeping with this idea, critics must develop some concept of the relationship between rhetorical form and history.

One perspective on this issue is suggested by Donald Bryant's notion of the "rhetorical function /as/ the function of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas."[103] Most critics seem to share Bryant's view of messages as being functional. As Swanson puts it, "this interest leads the critic to attempt an explanation of how the rhetorical event under study 'works,' to seek an account of how the features or properties of the event interact to produce an outcome."[104] Such a perspective lends itself to a functional view of rhetorical genres in history.[105] This view is significant because it would map patterns of discourse as rhetoric (rather than simply as historical data) by discerning regularities in what the discourse does, i.e., how it accomplishes goals or fulfills needs for speakers, audiences, and cultures. For example, in another context, Kaminsky has suggested that "one can argue that genre film, television, and literature have to a great extent replaced more formal versions of mythic response to existence such as religion and folk tale."[106] Statements of this type illustrate the use of discourse to meet the needs of the audience as well as its potential for accomplishing pragmatic goals. It is in this sort of functional critique that generic historical studies could be most effective. With coherent notions of form in hand, such studies could identify patterns of rhetorical problems, regularities in the forms brought to bear on those problems, and consistencies in the expectations and reactions of speakers, audiences, and societies. By tracing the evolution of these formal characteristics, genre criticism could contribute

vital insights to a "developmental history" of the practice of the rhetorical arts.[107]

CONCLUSION

One can be fairly certain that genre analysis will retain its popularity among critics for quite some time. If this method is to be utilized to its full potential, critics must be prepared to spell out the assumptions and implications of their work. Simple word counts or strategy tabulations will no longer suffice. This essay has reviewed some of the basic issues created by the advent of the generic approach and has linked several of these controversies to our field's slowness in coming to grips with the concept of "form." A survey of different notions of "form" and their consequent generic methodologies has been provided in order to clarify the need for explicit treatment of "form" and its relationship to the category of discourse under examination. Moreover, several additional suggestions have been offered in order to enhance the theoretical, historical, and critical value of generic inquiry. Hopefully, such a pause for reflection on the critic's art can be of some use in developing a more productive approach to the study of rhetorical genres.

ENDNOTES

1. Barnet Baskerville, "Selected Writings on the Criticism of Public Address," Essays on Rhetorical Criticism, ed. Thomas R. Nilsen (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 189-190. Otis M. Walter, "On the Varieties of Rhetorical Criticism," in Nilsen, p. 172. Jerry Hendrix, "An Introductory Prognosis," Southern Speech, 36 (Winter 1970), p. 103. Michael Halloran, "Doing Public Business in Public," Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action, eds. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (Falls Church, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1976), p. 135. Hereafter cited as Form and Genre. Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method, 2d ed. (Madison, Wi.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. ix-x.

2. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: An Introduction," Form and Genre, p. 14.

3. A truly complete listing of all the genre studies available in our field would be an enormous and pointless task (even if one could derive an acceptable definition of "genre"). Much of this literature is summarized in Campbell and Jamieson's (eds.) excellent volume, Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action. See especially the introductory essay by the editors. For a more comprehensive survey of citations, see the bibliography attached to the present study. However, if one had to choose a few "key" works which have proven consistently useful in this area, they should include the following: Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 1 (Winter 1968), pp. 1-14. Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre As Rhetorical Constraint," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 61 (December 1965), pp. 406-415. B.L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel, "The Spoke in Defense of Themselves: On the Generic Criticism of Apologia," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 59 (October 1973), pp. 273-283. Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Generic Constraints on the Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 6 (Summer 1973), pp. 162-170. Jackson Harrell and Wil A. Linkugel, "On Rhetorical Genre: An Organizing Perspective," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 11 (Fall 1978), pp. 262-281. Kenneth Burke, Counter-Statement, 2d ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953). Northrup Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957). Stuart M. Kaminsky, American Film Genres: Approaches to A Critical Theory of Popular Film (New York: Dell, 1974). Susanne K. Langer, Philosophy in A New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art, 3d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957). One work on this topic which has not received the attention it merits is Kathleen M. Jamieson, "The Standardization and Modification of Rhetorical Genres: A Perspective," Genre, 8 (September 1975), pp. 183-193.

4. Frye's argument on the nature of generic study is often quoted by scholars in our field: "the basis of genre criticism in any case is rhetorical, in the sense that the genre is determined

by the conditions established between the poet and his public." (p. 247). Bruce E. Gronbeck, "Celluloid Rhetoric: On Genres of Documentary," in Form and Genre, pp. 155, 156. For a brief history of the term "genre" in literature and art, see Gordon Bailey Washburn, "Definition of the Concept of Genre Art," Encyclopedia of World Art, Vol. 6 (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), Col. 81.

5. Thomas W. Benson, "The Senses of Rhetoric: A Topical System for Critics," Central States Speech Journal, 29 (Winter 1978), p. 245. See also, Joseph P. Strelka, ed., Theories of Literary Genre (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University, 1977), p. vii.

6. I am indebted for this list to Herbert W. Simons, "Genre-alizing About Rhetoric: A Scientific Approach," in Form and Genre, p. 36. See also, Campbell and Jamieson, pp. 15-16.

7. Harrell & Linkugel, p. 262.

8. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 27. See Also, Ernest G. Bormann, "Fetching Good out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity, Quarterly Journal of Speech, 63 (April 1977), p. 130, ftnt. 3. This is not to say that there is no effort being made to organize generic analysis into a coherent critical method; the Harrell and Linkugel article and the Form and Genre volume (especially the essays by Simons and Campbell and Jamieson) are such attempts. However, one needs to keep in mind that these endeavors to make genre study coallesce into an understandable whole have begun fairly recently.

9. This analysis of the diffusion of genre criticism should not be interpreted as necessarily being negative. For while such a profusion of disparate approaches may be detrimental to the formal rigor and parsimony of the method to a degree, it is also indicative of an active and creative critical environment--something which is an asset to any field.

10. Strelka, pp. viii-ix.

11. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 14.

12. Black, pp. 132-133, 134.

13. G.P. Mohrmann and Michael C. Leff, "Lincoln At Cooper Union: A Rationale for Neo-Classical Criticism," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 60 (Decmeber 1974), p. 463.

14. Ibid., p. 463. Harrell and Linkugel, p. 262. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 12. Once again, it is important to realize that the view of classical rhetoric as grounded in genre analysis is a product of recent times. Earlier scholars, such as Wichelns, resisted any notion of genre because it seemed to suggest literary, rather than rhetorical, criticism. One can understand such resistance to genre terminology in the Wicheln's era as a slight overzealousness by the scholars of the day who saw a dire necessity for separating the field of rhetoric from literature and English. See Mohrmann and Leff, p. 460.

15. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 18.

16. Harrell and Linkugel, p. 263.

17. Ibid., p. 263. This notion of genre is shared by Stuart M. Kaminsky in his treatment of popular film. See especially, p. 20.

18. Simons, p. 36. Simons is explicit in not limiting his understanding of "rhetorical genres" to "speeches, persuasive campaigns, or other such paradigmatic efforts."

19. Roderick P. Hart, "Theory-Building and Rhetorical Criticism: An Informal Statement of Opinion," Central States Speech Journal, 27 (Spring 1976), p. 74.

20. On neo-Aristotelian criticism, see, Robert Cathcart, Post-Communication: Criticism and Evaluation (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966); Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, and Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism, 2d ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1970).

21. For an example of content analysis see Donald L. Wolfarth, "John F. Kennedy in the Tradition of Inaugural Speeches: Quarterly Journal of Speech, 47 (April 1961), pp. 124-132. After presenting reams of statistical elaboration on various aspects of word number, sentence length, and issue priority, Wolfarth concludes that the Kennedy inaugural was, indeed, an inaugural. For the more phenomenological perspective on genres see Michael Osborn, "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 53 (April 1967), pp. 115.126.

22. Richard Hofstadter, The Paranoid Style in American Politics, And Other Essays (New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. 3-40.

23. Harold Zyskind, "A Rhetorical Analysis of the Gettysburg Address," Journal of General Education, 4 (April 1950), pp. 202-212.

24. Jackson Harrell, B.L. Ware, and Wil A. Linkugel, "Failure of Apology In American Politics: Nixon on Watergate," Speech Monographs, 42 (November 1975), pp. 245-261. This three-fold system, and accompanying examples, is derived from Harrell and Linkugel, pp. 274-276.

25. Mohrmann and Leff, pp. 464-465; Frye, pp. 247-248.

26. Benson, p. 245; Kaminsky, p. 12.

27. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 21.

28. Mohrmann and Leff, p. 463.

29. The potential value of this approach is confirmed by Samuel L. Becker's argument that one message seldom has a great

deal of influence on auditors. Becker's statement points toward the importance of repeated exposure to messages and thus suggests the importance of analyzing the effects which trends of discourse have on audiences. See "Rhetorical Studies For the Contemporary World," The Prospect of Rhetoric, eds. Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 25.

30. See Simons, p. 34. Kaminsky favors the genre approach because he feels it will add "scientific stability" to film criticism. See American Film Genres, p. 15. For the humanist view see Ernest G. Bormann,"Generalizing About Significant Form: Science and Humanism Compared and Contrasted," and "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form: A Humanist Approach," in Form and Genre, pp. 51-69; 165-187.

31. Hart, p. 75. For further amplification of this position see Gronbeck, p. 158; Harrell and Linkugel, p. 278.

32. This problem is explained by Harrell and Linkugel, pp. 277, 278. The problem of "replicability" of generic definitions may account for Wayne Booth's observation that the potential list of genres is virtually infinite. Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Irony (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 208-209; cited by Simons, p. 41.

33. Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "The Experience of Criticism," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 60 (December 1974), p. 491; quoted in Borman "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form," p. 175. Rosenfield's argument here is not a per se indictment of generic methods but an attack on any "cookie-cutter" approach to inquiry. This view is also expressed by: David L. Swanson, "The Requirements of Critical Justifications," Communication Monographs, 44 (November 1977), pp. 309-310; and L. David Allen, Science Fiction Reader's Guide (Lincoln, Neb.: Centennial Press, 1973), p. 5.

34. William Righter, Logic and Criticism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 125.

35. Bitzer, pp. 14. Extensions of Bitzer's thinking are found in Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 6 (Summer 1973), pp. 162-170; and Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre As Rhetorical Constraint," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 61 (December 1975), pp. 406-415.

36. The definitional issue is described by Simons, pp. 42-43. The problem of determinism is discussed extensively in John H. Patton, "Causation and Creativity in Rhetorical Situations: Distinctions and Implications," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 65 (February 1979), pp. 36-55. Patton offers a defense of Bitzer on the grounds that situational factors may be causal without being deterministic.

37. This and several other criticisms of the situational theory are noted by Campbell and Jamieson, p. 15.

38. For a wide variety of commentary on the "rhetorical situation" see David S. Kaufer, "Point of View in Rhetorical Situations: Classical and Romantic Contrasts and Contemporary Implications," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 65 (April 1979), pp. 171-186. Scott Consigny, "Rhetoric and Its Situations," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 7 (Summer 1974), pp. 175-86. Richard L. Larson, "Lloyd Bitzer's 'Rhetorical Situation' and the Classification of Discourse: Problems and Implications," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 3 (Summer 1970), pp. 165-168. Arthur B. Miller, "Rhetorical Exigence," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 5 (Spring 1972), pp. 111-118. Ralph S. Pomeroy, "Fitness of Response in Bitzer's Concept of Rhetorical Discourse," Georgia Speech Communication Journal, 4 (1972), pp. 42-71. Richard E. Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 6 (Summer 1973), pp. 154-161. K.E. Wilkerson, "On Evaluating Theories of Rhetoric," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 3 (1970), pp. 82-96.

39. This position is strongly represented in the thinking of William Righter, pp. 129-130.

40. Hart, p. 74.

41. Ibid., p. 74. Once again, we must bear in mind the distinction between a flaw inherent to the generic method and one that characterizes the ineffective ways in which the method has often been used.

42. Donald C. Bryant, Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism (Baton Rouge: L.S.U. Press, 1973), p. 12; quoted in Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint," p. 406.

43. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 19. See also, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Criticism: Ephemeral and Enduring," Speech Teacher, 23 (January 1974), p. 12.

44. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 18. See also, W. Tatarkiewicz, "Form in the History of Aesthetics," Dictionary of the History of Ideas, Vol. 2 ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), pp. 216-225.

45. One obvious exception to this claim is Kenneth Burke's Counter-Statement, 2d ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953). Burke pursues his concept of form in many of his later works. A useful summary of the Burkeian notion is found in Richard B. Gregg, "Kenneth Burke's Prolegomena to the Study of Rhetorical Form," Communication Quarterly, 26 (Fall 1978), pp. 3-13.

46. Edwin Black, "The Sentimental Style as Escapism, or the Devil with Dan'l Webster," in Form and Genre, pp. 75-76.

47. Harrell and Linkugel, pp. 266-270. This formulation is drawn from Stephen C. Pepper, World Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942). A similar distinction for the criticism of literary genres is suggested

by Donald F. Castro, "Tragedy, The Generic Approach: A Metacritical Look," Genre, 7 (September 1974), pp. 250-271. Castro would refer to such a continuum as distinguishing "existentialist" from "essentialist" critics.

48. Burke, pp. 184-185.

49. Pepper, pp. 151, 152, 159-160, 164.

50. No claim is made that this listing of formal concepts is comprehensive. Rather, these ideas are to serve as examples of major notions of form and their related generic methods.

51. Harrell and Linkugel provide both the terminology and the examples for this conception of form; pp. 267-270.

52. See Wolfarth, p. 124. Simons supports the legitimacy of such statistical approaches; p. 39.

53. See Thomas D. Clark, "An Exploration of Generic Aspects of Christian Sermons," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 63 (December 1977), pp. 384-394. Kaminsky also endorses this view for film critics; p. 19.

54. Clark, p. 394.

55. Clark's conclusion seems typical of that of many rhetorical scholars, that is, it assumes if some philosophical or normative notion of form hasn't been encountered, that no concept of form has been of any real importance to the study (beyond providing a noun for labelling categories of rhetorical strategy). In fact, such critics always employ some concept of form, but they usually do so implicitly.

56. Harrell and Linkugel, pp. 272-273. Fisher's views are expressed in, "A Motive View of Communication," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56 (April 1970), pp. 131-139.

57. See Sherry Devereaux Butler, "The Apologia, 1971 Genre," Southern Speech Communication Journal, 37 (Spring 1972), pp. 281-289.

58. See Barnet Baskerville, "The Illusion of Proof," Western Speech, 25 (Fall 1961), pp. 236-242.

59. Most of these examples are taken from Harrell and Linkugel, pp. 272-273.

60. Swanson, p. 309. Swanson goes on to observe that "adding discourse to the elements of situation appears to produce what, for most genre critics is a crude but perhaps not unsatisfactory definition of 'form.' Thus the search for rhetorical forms is typically a quest for identifiable types of rhetorical situations. Formal evaluative criteria, in turn, are often drawn from the distinctive exigence, audience, rhetor, and other elements comprising the rhetorical situation endemic to the form." (p. 309.)

61. The first view is that of Bitzer, the second is expressed by Simons in his essay in Form and Genre, and the third is exemplified by Bormann's own notion of the "fantasy theme." Bormann, "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form," pp. 180-181.

62. Bitzer, p. 6.

63. Those who advocate a cultural perspective on discourse seldom frame their thinking in terms of "rhetorical situations." However, it is my belief that much of this terminology can be usefully applied on the macro level. Whole cultures do encounter rhetorical exigencies or problems (e.g., war) and they do construct discursive responses (e.g., propaganda campaigns). The utility of this perspective stems mainly from its ability to appreciate cultural phenomena as rhetoric (i.e., influential symbolic acts) rather than as merely the objects of study for rhetorical scholars who wish to produce second-hand sociology. A good example of the appreciation of a cultural artifact as a genre of rhetoric is found in Bruce Gronbeck's essay on the documentary film in Form and Genre, pp. 139-161.

64. Ibid., p. 140.

65. Ibid., pp. 140-141. Gronbeck contends that such patterns of arrangement are "macro-units of form" while devices such as "transitions, fadeouts in film, retards in music," are "micro-units of form." (p. 141.)

66. Ibid., p. 141. Gronbeck's position on form is consistent with that of Hugh Duncan, Communication and Social Order (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 320-321.

67. James W. Pratt, "An Analysis of Three Crisis Speeches," Western Speech, 34 (Summer 1970), p. 202. See also the study by Howard S. Erlich, "'. . . And By Opposing, End Them,' The Genre of Moral Justification for Legal Transgressions," Today's Speech, 23 (Winter 1975), pp. 13-16.

68. Gronbeck, p. 141.

69. Stuart Kaminsky argues, for example, that "if a film is popular, its popularity is not mystical. It is a result of the fact that the film or series of films corresponds to an interest--even a need--of the viewing public. The genre critic does not castigate society for responding to the popular work; he examines the work to determine why it evokes response . . . Genre analysis involves an attempt to understand the milieu and background of the work through its relationship with religion, mythology, the social sciences, psychology, and anthropology." (P. 14.)

70. James W. Chesebro, "Cultures in Conflict: A Generic and Axiological View," Today's Speech, 21 (Spring 1973), pp. 11-20. See also, James R. Andrews, "Reflections of the National Character in American Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 57 (October 1971), pp. 316-324.

71. The nature-nurture debate has been underway for many years and no author with whom I am familiar expects a verdict in the foreseeable future.

72. Mohrmann and Leff, p. 463. Craig R. Smith interprets Aristotle's notion of form as follows: "In the Metaphysics and De Anima, Aristotle argued that form was the actuality of an entity in the way efficient cause and telos manifest existence . . . When this analysis is applied to rhetoric, the analogies are not difficult to work out. Form gives speech actuality. And it is in just this way that Aristotle spoke about the three forms of discourse. He wrote of how they organize the matter of discourse toward certain purposeful occasions. Elements, aims, setting, audience, all helped define either the efficient cause of the speech or its telos." "A Reinterpretation of Aristotle's Notion of Rhetorical Form," Western Journal of Speech Communication, 43 (Winter 1979), p. 14.

73. This element of predictability of audience response would be most crucial in the area of constructing enthymenes, in that the rhetorical syllogism assumes some advance knowledge of the ways in which auditors will "fill in" the unspoken portions of the argument.

74. Langer, pp. 89, 90. See also, pp. 266-267. Langer extends this and other arguments into a philosophy of art in Feeling and Form, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953).

75. Burke, p. 31.

76. Ibid., p. 124. Burke goes on to discuss "five aspects of form" including "progressive form (subdivided into syllogistic and qualitative progression), repetitive form, conventional form, and minor or incidental forms." (p. 124.)

77. Gregg, p. 5.

78. Ibid., p. 8.

79. Ronald H. Carpenter, "The Historical Jeremiad As Rhetorical Genre," in Form and Genre, p. 104. An important aspect of Carpenter's observation is his definition of form as rhetorical by way of his equation of the instrumental with the significant.

80. Burke, p. 126.

81. Ibid., p. 126.

82. Ibid., pp. 204, 209.

83. Gregg, p. 12.

84. See David A. Ling, "A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Edward Kennedy's Address 'To the People of Massachusetts,' July 25, 1969," Central States Speech Journal, 21 (Summer 1970), pp. 81-86.

85. See Michael S. Osborn, pp. 115-126.

86. See Hermann G. Stelzner, "The Quest Story and Nixon's November 3, 1969, Address," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 57 (April 1971), pp. 163-172.

87. Black, "The Sentimental Style," p. 85.

88. This position is developed at some length by Smith, pp. 14-25.

89. Bormann, "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form," p. 173.

90. This view is advocated by Campbell and Jamieson, p. 21.

91. Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre As Rhetorical Constraint," p. 414.

92. Jamieson, "Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation," p. 165. A good example of such constraints in operation and their ultimate violation is Martin J. Medhurst's study of Presidential inaugural prayers. "American Cosmology and the Rhetoric of Inaugural Prayer," Central States Speech Journal, 28 (Winter 1977), pp. 272-282.

93. Jamieson, "The Standardization and Modification of Rhetorical Genres: A Perspective," p. 183.

94. Ibid., pp. 183-193.

95. Ibid., p. 183.

96. This view is articulated by Swanson, p. 320.

97. Black, The Sentimental Style," p. 85.

98. The ability to evaluate the critic through careful consideration of his or her explanatory scheme is posited by Righter, p. 124.

99. Black, Rhetorical Criticism, p. xii.

100. Bormann, "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form," p. 179.

101. Campbell and Jamieson, p. 27.

102. Bormann, "Rhetorical Criticism and Significant Form," p. 177. Bormann goes on to point out that historians are in much disagreement over the feasibility, accuracy, and desirability of generalizing about the past.

103. Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Function and Scope," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 39 (December 1953), reprinted in Contemporary Rhetoric: A Reader's Coursebook, ed. Douglas Ehninger (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1972), p. 26.

104. Swanson, p. 313. Swanson goes on to point out that this consensus of perspective is accompanied by "considerable disagreement" over "what counts as an explanation . . ." (p. 313.)

105. The notion of "functionalism" in historical explanation is elaborated by Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., A Behavioral Approach to Historical Analysis (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 175-207. Berkhofer notes that the varieties of functionalism range from strict organic interpretations to much much more informal viewpoints.

106. Kaminsky, pp. 12-13.

107. The case for historical analysis of essential forms in discourse is argued by John Rathbun, "The Problem of Judgment and Effect in Historical Criticism: A Proposed Solution," Western Speech, 33 (Summer 1969), pp. 146-159.

PART II:

GENRE CRITICISM: JUDGMENT, ARGUMENT, AND EVIDENCE

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In my essay Genre Criticism: The Analysis of Form, (Part I in this series), a case was made for grounding notions of "genre" in a clearly defined concept of "form." The present essay will offer a perspective on the methodological implications of form-grounded genre studies. The issues addressed will include: (1) The nature of judgment for the genre critic; (2) The role of argument in generic studies, and; (3) The criteria by which critics can evaluate the evidence brought to bear on claims made about discourse. Ultimately, a review of various perspectives on generic methodology will culminate in the presentation of a hypothetical approach to such criticism that combines the benefits of inductive and deductive study. Hopefully, this project will help to define some major features of the generic method, to evaluate their formal and heuristic character, and to suggest useful extensions of extant methodologies.

Judgment in Genre Criticism

A fully developed generic method should make at least three types of critical judgments if the illumination of discourse is to be maximized:[1] (1) Definitional evaluations: This kind of judgment attempts to answer the question, "What is X?" The basic procedure here is to locate salient characteristics which separate X from all non-X categories or entities. Such evaluations could be reached by what Harrell and Linkugel might call "immanent" methods, i.e., comparing X_1 to X_2 in order to derive some notion of commonality. Alternatively, a normative approach might be used wherein X could be compared with some model "X" in order to assess the "fit" between object and ideal.

Finally, a perspective could be adopted in which the critic attempts to define X by locating features which are so universal and highly abstract that they form a primary part of the psychology of a a series of rhetorical acts and thus "transcend" any one example.[2] (2) Functional evaluations: A critic engaged in this sort of judgment tries to answer the question, "How does X work?" One approach to this task is to analyze the ways in which various subcategories of the rhetorical act relate to each other in order to locate similarities in what Campbell and Jamieson call the "internal dynamic" that is the heart of the way the act "works."[3] This "dynamic" is composed of the ways in which the various aspects of X relate to and depend upon each other for rhetorical force. Another perspective on functionalism would call for the critic to examine similarities in external effects of X on audiences, speakers, and cultures.[4] (3) Teleological evaluation:[5] The investigators interested in this sort of judgment seek an answer to the query, "Why is X the way it is?" One vantage point on such inquiry is to attempt to discern speakers' motivational reasons for constructing discourse in a certain way. A second sort of causal[6] judgment might involve an analysis of situational factors, such as audience expectations, antecedent genres, nature of issues, media, etc., which have a hand in shaping X. Thus, teleological genre critics seek to identify and evaluate similarities in the forces which bring examples of discourse into being in specific configurations.[7]

It is important to recall that the varieties of generic judgment specified here are often employed together. Moreover, modes of evaluation can be combined, as is the practice of those Burkeian critics

who observe their mentor's injunction to "use all there is to use;" or, they can be cast in substantially different formats, as any comparison of Neo-Aristotelian and "fantasy theme" genre analysis will reveal.[8] In the end, however, all of these diverse perspectives are bound together by one principle: they must somehow assist critics in making meaningful judgments.

For genre critics, such judgments take two forms, intrinsic and extrinsic. These forms of evaluation may be conceived as an additional dimension of the three categories of judgment specified previously. Intrinsic judgments on definitional, funtional, and teleological issues are those which locate important features of a piece of discourse by examining internal aspects of the rhetoric itself. Extrinsic judgment focuses on the relationship of a rhetorical artifact to other rhetorical artifacts. Thus, the intrinsic evaluation bears on the nature of the act and forms the premises for the extrinsic judgments that produce comparisons between acts. The combination of these stages renders a final verdict on whether the available evidence warrants a declaration that a genre has been located.[9] The relationship of intrinsic/extrinsic judgment to the three modes of evaluation might be formulated more clearly if a few examples are considered.

The Neo-Aristotelian critic, for instance, might define a discourse by applying a pre-conceived category, such as deliberative, forensic, or epideictic. In addition, this critic would trace the functional aspects of the discourse by locating internal dependencies, such as argumentative premises, or by assessing the effect of a speech on the immediate audience. Teleological judgment could be

rendered by way of a thorough biographical analysis of the speaker/s/, an assessment of the nature of the audiences, and/or a study of the issues to be treated in the situation in question. The judgments reached in this fashion are generally deductive and often focus on effects, ethics, or the per se insights of categorization.[10] A Burkeian critic, on the other hand, might define a genre by identifying terminological schemes or major symbolic imagery, and could proceed to make functional judgments by analyzing the ways in which these entities interact to form a cohesive whole (e.g., mystification in the rhetoric of science or religion), or the ways in which symbols influence or express the motives of the auditor. In addition, the origins of the discourse could be sought in a discussion of the motives of the artist, as Burke does in his study of the role of drug addiction on Coleridge's poetic imagery; or, in symbolically articulated artifacts of culture, as when fear and uncertainty seem to be goading the rhetoric of scapegoating. (scapegoading?) Critical judgments on genre by the Burkeian critic may be deductive if a method such as the pentad is rigorously applied; or, they may be inductive, as when the critic counts key terms and constructs equations and clusters. The results produced by such inquiry may bear on commonalities of symbolism, identification, or motive which inhere in a genus. Finally, the critic who pursues Simons' notion of a "science of rhetorical genres" might locate a discursive genus by tabulating objective characteristics of random samples of X, complete with control groups, and would make functional judgments by tracing correlations among "patterns of rhetorical practice" and the relationship

between these patterns and audience reaction. Teleological assessment would be reached via correlation of discourse to objectively measured features of motive and situation. Ultimately, inductive intrinsic judgments would be collated to form extrinsic generic determinations capable of producing law-like statements about human message-making.[11] Thus, even given this diversity of perspectives each of these methods must proceed from an intrinsically determined notion of rhetorical form to an extrinsically determined notion of rhetorical genre. If one is to fully understand the nature and scope of the critical insight afforded by each stage of this procedure, one needs to inquire into the process whereby genre critics posit, rationalize, and document their judgments.

Argument in Genre Criticism

Argument is reason-giving discourse. As arguers, critics are obliged to present some sort of rationale for what they do.[12] The types of arguments developed in this rationale usually focus on the validity of critical judgment, rather than on a formal defense of method. For example, one seldom sees a Neo-Aristotelian critic begin an article with a defense of the heuristic value of the Rhetoric. However, when the critic begins to evaluate discourse and to make claims of insight, the audience has a right to expect that reasons for these judgments will be provided. One needs to ask, then, what constitutes a "reason" for a genre critic? The answer to this question will be contingent on the investigator's method and on his or her perspective on that method.

David Swanson has observed that critical procedures tend to fall into two categories: (1) First order construction systems: Here the investigator assumes that he or she imposes meaning upon action by the application of a formal method. The underlying premise of this view is that there is an "unproblematic" world of "pre-given" meanings somewhere out there that is waiting to be brought to light in research, and; (2) Second order construction systems: Operating from this perspective, the critic sees meaning as constructed by situated social actors and sets out to understand the "process by which persons construct interpretations (meanings) for their actions and the products of that activity, personal meanings for themselves."[13] Swanson goes on to argue that this categorization of method can be viewed from either of two "stances:" (1) The mundane stace: wherein the critic views his or her role as simply one of reporting the way the world "factually and indubitably is." For this critic, external verification is unnecessay since the judgments reached should be self-evident to anyone applying the method with rigor. As a result, critical discourse is better understood as "explication rather than argument," and; (2) the critical stance: wherein the investigator calls judgments into question and, thus, perceives a need for verification of his or her conclusions in a fashion independent of the method itself. "Such critics typically engage in discourse which is argumentative or demonstrative (offering verification of their conclusions) rather than merely explicative."[14] Realizing that critics shift stances within a single work on occasion, and that they may not even be aware of

their assumptions in this regard, the scheme provided here affords a significant insight into the ways in which critics argue.[15]

Swanson notes that genre criticism is typically a first order construction system.[16] However, while this contention may be true in many cases, an examination of several types of generic study will reveal that this notion is perhaps overly limited. Hopefully, such a discussion can provide useful conclusions about the types of arguments produced by different varieties of generic study: (1) Neo-Aristotelian Criticism: This critic is employing a first order construction system from either a mundane or critical stance. In the mundane posture, genre is revealed through application of a categorical method and subsequent comparison of results across samples of discourse. Since the method is assumed to produce indubitable facts, the only real argument concerns whether or not the procedure has been faithfully applied. "Reasons," then, are any statements which tend to affirm claims that one's method has been applied with a rigor born of scrupulous attention to procedural detail (e.g., a step-by-step review of relevant categories and their application in the study). However, in the critical stance, the Neo-Aristotelian student of genre would, after applying the categories of the method, seek out external verification of the verdict reached. "Reasons" for this critic would be composed of statements indicating a correlation between external measures of validity, such as historical evidence, and the judgments attendant to the procedure used.

(2) Burkeian Criticism: Employing a first order construction system (e.g., rigid application of the pentad), the Burkeian critic operates

and argues much as does the Neo-Aristotelian. However, a Burkeian perspective may also be conceived as a second order system in which symbols are evaluated as a means of appreciating the realities constructed by situated actors. From a mundane perspective, such a critic would seek to formulate an interpretation, rather than an argument, that would present the meanings experienced by those persons under study. "Reasons," for this scholar, would be made up of statements tending to show that the judgments derived were related to principles of inquiry embedded in the method, and not simply the result of the idiosyncrasies of the critic. Alternatively, a Burkeian adopting a critical stance would pursue "convergent validity," grounded in external entities, for any judgments reached. For instance, the phenomenologically-oriented critic would seek validation of judgment in the perspectives of situated actors. "Reasons," then, would be those grounds in the constructed realities of persons under study that are consistent with the judgments made by the critic.

(3) Scientific Criticism: This approach to generic analysis is clearly a first order construction system. However, unlike the other two methods addressed here, this perspective offers the simultaneous combination of the mundane and the critical stances. The scientific faith in method reflects the mundane posture, while the perceived need for corroboration of findings (e.g., replication of studies) speaks to a critical stance. Basically, then, as a subdivision of the larger category of scientific inquiry, scientific generic study must be conducted under the aegis of specific procedural rules. Springing from the principles of the scientific method, these metho-

dological rules dictate what is appropriate procedure for the "scientific" investigator. As a result, the arguments made by such scholars are also a subset of the principles of science. Investigators must look to procedural principles, for example the need for "control groups" in statistical comparisons, as sources from which arguments can be invented to support their claims. "Reasons," then, consist of statements which favorably compare the scholar's judgments to accepted standards of scientific inquiry. If such standards are rigorously adhered to, the method will speak for itself, within its limits (or so scientists would like to have us believe).

The schema of argumentative styles developed here makes it clear that the procedures of the generic methodology can take many forms. However, all of these varieties of argument share the common features of being oriented toward discerning regularities in discourse and of attempting to support claims which exploit the implications of these regularities in a way that will prove enlightening. The specific techniques by which genre scholars argue for their judgments will vary with the method of inquiry utilized. Moreover, styles of argument may also be used interchangeably as critics address their subjects from more than one perspective, or from a vantage point that does not fit neatly into the schema here provided. At best, then, one can construct <u>categories of argument</u> which seem to typify major strands of generic procedure. Swanson's thinking provides on useful way of organizing this material. Certainly, there are other ways as well. Thus, in some form, all genre critics must make evaluations on the intrinsic and extrinsic features of discourse that

are supported by "reasons" which possess varying degrees of verifiability. One source of such reasons is the evidence provided by the discourse itself.

Discourse As Evidence in Genre Criticism

Any criticism which treats discourse as evidence for its conclusions must assume that the text can be subdivided in such a way that the examination of the parts will afford insight into the whole in a manner greater than the simple sum of the particulars. This subdivision may be governed by pre-conceived categories, conceptual constructs, or any other principle suggested by the critic's method. The use of discursive evidence by generic scholars can be more clearly understood though an application of these principles to three schools of criticism: deductive, inductive, and hypothetical.

As suggested above, a deductive approach to genre criticism would proceed by comparing a discourse to some model or ideal in order to define the nature and function of the rhetorical act.[18] A Neo-Aristotelian, for example, might use the epideictic notions of "praise" and "blame" developed in the Rhetoric as a model with which a eulogy could be identified and analyzed. For this critic, "evidence" from a text would consist of those elements in the discourse which could be cited as fitting (or not fitting) the categories of the model. The Neo-Aristotelian might quote portions of a speech where the orator used statistical evidence, for example, in order to classify the speaker's proofs as logical (logos) rather than emotional (pathos). The nature of evidence, then, is contingent upon the pre-conceived model being applied to the rhetorical transaction.

Alternatively, a critic employing an inductive approach is uncertain at the outset as to whether a genre exists in a series of rhetorical transactions.[19] This investigator surveys a wide variety of discourse in an attempt to make both intrinsic and extrinsic judgments as to the existence and implications of a genre. In such criticism, "evidence" consists of any subdivision of a discourse that evinces significant form or speaks to possible regularities with other samples of utterance. The inductive critic, for example, might look for enthymemes, major metaphors, or any other variety of significant form revealed in the text. Thus, "evidence" is a broadly defined termed, the products of which are sifted by the critic in order to render intrinsic and extrinsic judgments.

In addition, a critic of genus may adopt a hypothetical perspective. This view represents the mid-range between strict deduction and completely informal induction. The inquirer who holds this viewpoint probably has strong suspicions that a genre may exist and may even have an embryonic notion of some of its definitional, functional, and teleological features. However, the critic's concept of the genre is not sufficiently developed to constitute a model to which discourse could be compared in a formal way. In this case, the existence of a low-level notion of genre seems to make pure induction inappropriate, while the lack of formal rigor in the generic idea also makes a deductive approach of dubious value.

A viable alternative for the critic is to treat his or her formative conception of genre X as a hypothesis to be assessed, modified, and formalized in the act of criticism.[20] Such a procedure operates on the cyclical premise that an informal notion of genre (hypothesis)

can direct research and thought, while the process of criticism itself acts to develop the hypothesis further or to discard it in favor of more powerful and parsimonious explanations. A critic engaged in this cycle might suspect that a genre of "conspiracy rhetoric" exists in American discourse, based on his or her observation of the use of conspiracy arguments in a number of differing contexts. Prompted by the potential importance of this conjecture, the invest gator would then formulate statements containing tentative descriptions of the definitional, functional, and teleological features of the alleged genus. Next, the inquirer would select samples of discourse from a variety of settings which may be members of such a genre, if it exists. The ultimate critical task, then, is to analyze the discourse,using the tools specified in this essay and the previous one, in order to confirm, deny, or modify the hypothetical statements. This process yields significant insights into the discourse per se, as well as providing judgments by which the rigor, parsimony, and explanatory power of the hypothesis can be tested.

For this style of criticism, "evidence" is a multi-faceted concept. In one sense, quotations from a text could serve as "evidence" of common strategies or imagery and,thus,fit into the rationale for the critic's judgments. However, this notion of probative materials is certainly not unique to genre criticism nor to its hypothetical sub-species. A more genre-specific concept of evidence in this context is grounded in the critic's obligation to systematize the subdivisions of discourse according to the governing principles of the specific generic method employed . This principle applies

both to those arguments on the location of a genre and to those which treat the implications of the rhetorical genus. (In this latter sense, the need to systematize evidence in an insightful and artistic way would probably apply to any type of rhetorical criticism). Thus, a Burkeian critic would locate those portions of discourse (perhaps terminology or imagery) which spoke to the nature of signifincant rhetorical forms (perhaps a hierarchy). By integrating Burkeian subdivisions of discourse into a coherent critical system, the inquirer brings the intrinsic aspects of discourse to bear on the rationale for his or her judgments. This process can be conducted on the intrinsic or extrinsic level of evaluation and should span definitional, functional, and teleological categories .

In the area of definitional evaluation, features of discourse such as arguments or stylistic devices are located and compared in order to identify important intrinsic and extrinsic relationships. Thus, "evidence" consists of any subdivision, as dictated by method, through which rhetorical forms and discursive patterns become apparent. Campbell and Jamieson suggest that, while critics should only make generic judgments when compelled to by much insightful appraisal, such judgments can be made if there is more evidence of rhetorical similarity than of rhetorical differences within a "constellation of fused elements" that make up the heart of a genus of rhetoric.[21]

One finds further development of this idea in the field of functional evaluation. The critic's task here is to integrate discourse into a meaningful account of how a genre operates, both internally and externally. In assessing the "internal dynamic" of

discourse, the critic treats as evidence any portion of the text which speaks to a relationship of dependence between two significant rhetorical forms. For instance, the investigator might identify key images of America in a Fourth of July Oration which serve as premises for arguments on the nature of democracy and the responsibilities of citizenship. Campbell and Jamieson argue persuasively that sufficient evidence of a generic "internal dynamic" has been amassed when the critic determines that removal of any one element of the "dynamic fusion" would necessarily and fundamentally alter the genus. In a discussion of the papal encyclical genre, they illustrate this view:

> One cannot abandon elements of a genre which are dynamically fused without undermining the genre itself. For example, classical Latin with its rigorous controlling verbs complements the deductive structure of the papal encyclical, and that structure is dictated by and consonant with the concept of papal authority on matters of dogma.22

Hence, those portions or categories of a rhetorical act which bear on the existence of such an "internal dynamic" are regarded as "evidence." Alternatively, when the critic's attention turns to the external functions of a suspected genus, he or she will locate aspects of utterance (especially parts of the "internal dynamic") which can be correlated with discernable effects in the audience or the speaker. Thus, the subdivisions of the text are brought into a system of supporting materials which provides a warrant for critical claims.

Such subdivisions are also used to buttress teleological arguments by revealing the forces that influence speech. For example, overt statements of occasion or intent, imagery displaying the speaker's perception of the audience, or the ways in which issues are defined

in an oration could all be used as "proof" of causal claims. Here again, the "evidence" must be integrated into the critic's analysis of the hypothesis in question so as produce systematic judgments affording both intrinsic and extrinsic insights.

The preceding discussion of the evidential role of discourse in genre study may be summarized as follows: (1) The critic's conception of evidence will be determined largely by the specific method employed and by his or her stance toward that method. (2) The basic feature of critical "evidence" is its character as a subdivision of discourse. The mode of subdivision is contingent upon the perspective assumed by the investigator. (3) Evidence formulated in this way serves the critic by providing the materials with which to construct a rationale for the ultimate judgments rendered, and for the intermediate evaluations conducted along the way. Moreover, evidence-by-subdivision equips the inquirer with a scheme whereby portions of discourse can be viewed in abstract, and hence , more manageable ways.[23] (4) For genre critics, "evidence" is as much a necessity of method as a requirement of technical rigor. Indeed, decisions about the mode of subdivision employed to formulate "evidence," and the relation of the consequent probative materials to one's hypothesis should be an essential starting point for any generic inquiry of this type. The actual procedure of the method should focus on the critic's task of integrating evidence into a <u>systematic</u> framework supportive of intrinsic judgments on formal qualities and extrinsic judgments on generic regularities. The steps followed in this process will depend to a large extent on the resources afforded by the critic's

method and the insight afforded by the critic's artistry. (5) All of the evidential aspects of discourse in regard to definitional, functional, and teleological evaluation should be integrated into a cycle of hypothesis-refinement that leads the critic to the most persuasive explanations and the most provocative insights.

It is my contention that the hypothetical method may often provide critical illumination that is less problematic than that attendant to inductive or deductive procedures. Campbell and Jamieson observe that deductive assumptions (e.g., the a priori belief that sermons constitute a genre) are often combined with an inductive method (e.g., content analysis to"parse its elements"). As a result, critics run the risk of producing circular arguments that illuminate only what has already been assumed.[24] A second problem with a deductive assumption is that, linked with a strictly deductive method, it is often limited to purely formalistic kinds of judgments about whether or not discourse "fits" a descriptive category and how well or how poorly it compares with normative models.[25] In addition, inductive methods also face difficulties. The necessity of surveying and analyzing large amounts of material poses substantial logistical problems for the critic. Moreover, this procedure shares the problems of all modes of inductive generalization. That is, formulating a systematic whole from an entire universe of discourse (e.g., war rhetoric) that meets standards of representativeness, objectivity, and technical rigor is a difficult task likely to produce results far more disappointing than the scientific or quasi-scientific judgments for which the investigator hoped.[26]

In contrast to these methods, a hypothetical procedure offers the critic a measure of the guidance value of the deductive scheme while retaining the flexibility of an inductive approach. The act of acknowledging the formative, open-ended nature of the generic hypothesis would help to avoid the rigidity and circularity that can attend formalistic deduction, while providing a structure within which the actual study of discourse can be organized. Rather than simply assuming the existence of a genre and setting out to define its features, the hypothetical approach assumses that a genre may exist and sets out to test that assumption by seeing what sorts of intrinsic and extrinsic judgments can be produced by a careful analysis of discourse. For the hypothetical critic, then, the nature of genre is that of a research question to be formalized or modified in the act of criticism, not a self-evident landscape to be mapped, or a general impulse to read every political oration ever given to see what "turns up."[27] Finally, the technique advocated here has the additional advantage of being flexible enough to be useful to both humanistic styles of critique as well as more scientifically-oriented study. By employing this method, genre critics could construct enlightening perspectives on rhetorical acts by using the very process of criticism to forge intrinsic and extrinsic judgments.

Conclusion

Abraham Kaplan has posited the basic question of inquiry as: "What the devil is going on around here?"[28] Goaded by this query, critics employ a wide variety of methods in there efforts to find answers. But, as William Righter has observed, "the best chosen

model throws an intermittent light."[29] This essay has attempted to provide additional illumination on the methodological and historical aspects of genre criticism. A theory of judgment, argument, and evidence in generic procedure has been advanced and some historical implications of this and other ideas have been discussed. In addition, a hypothesis-refinement perspective on generic inquiry has been advocated as an alternative to purely inductive or deductive approaches. If there is any one conclusion that can be drawn from this study, it is that students of genus must <u>think</u> and <u>argue</u> explicitly about their formal, procedural, and judgmental assumptions. Only in this way can the theoretical dialog be established that is essential to the refinement of generic techniques and the enhancement of generic insight. Hopefully, this analysis provides significant reasons for for genre critics to re-evaluate the tools of their art.

ENDNOTES

[1] Owing to the great diversity in the theory and practice of genre criticism, the scheme developed here is framed in rather abstract terms in hopes of subsuming most of the important features of generic judgment-making.

[2] This terminology ("immanent" and "transcendent") is adapted from Jackson Harrell and Wil.A. Linkugel, "On Rhetorical Genres: An Organizing Perspective," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 11 (Fall 1978), p. 266. Examples of immanent, normative, and transcendent varieties of judgment are abundant in my earlier essay on genres.

[3] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson , "Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: An Introduction," Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action (Falls Church, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1976), p. 21.

[4] An example of this "internal" view would be Campbell and Jamieson's brief discussion of the papal encyclical, p. 24. The "external" view is exemplified by Ernest G. Bormann, "Fetching Good Out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 63 (April 1977), pp. 130-139. As one might suspect, genre critics often use these two perspectives in tandem.

[5] I am not using the term teleological in its strict philosophical sense or in reference to all of its metaphysical implications. Rather, it is to be understood as a term describing any sort of entity or pattern of entities which are, in some sense, caused.

[6] Motivational analysis is treated (explicitly or implicitly)in studies of the apologia, for instance, Sherry Devereaux Butler, "The Apologia, 1971 Genre," Southern Speech Communication Journal, 37 (Spring 1972), pp. 281-289. A theory of situational genre is discussed by Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "The Standardization and Modification of Rhetorical Genres, A Perspective," Genre, 8 (September 1975), pp. 183-193.

[7] This analysis of causation need not be deterministic, as is argued persuasively by John H. Patton, "Causation and Creativity in Rhetorical Situations: Distinctions and Implications," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 65 (February 1979), pp. 36-55.

[8] The suggestion that "fantasy themes" and "rhetorical visions" may be useful organizing principles for genres is made by Bormann, p. 130.

[9] Campbell and Jamieson might metaphorically compare intrinsic judgment to the "genetic code" that distinguishes a species, and extrinsic judgment to the perception of stars as a "constellation"

of entities related to and influencing each other, pp. 24-25. The notion that internal rhetorical forms serve as the basis for determining external generic regularities is adapted from Edwin Black, "The Sentimental Style As Escapism, or the Devil With Dan'l Webster," in Form and Genre, pp. 75-76.

[10] Craig R. Smith makes a strong case for viewing the interaction of Aristotelian categories (deliberative, forensic, epideictic) as a tool for explaining the workings of discourse. "A Reinterpretation of Aristotle's Notion of Rhetorical Form," Western Speech, 43 (Winter 1979), pp. 14-25.

[11] The scientific perspective on genre study is developed by Herbert W. Simons, "Genre-alizing About Rhetoric: A Scientific Approach," in Form and Genre, pp. 34, 36. One might make a persuasive case that such "scientific" inquiry is not criticism in the common sense of the term. However, the inclusion of this type of scholarship here was deemed necessary because of its prevalence in our literature, both as a specific method and as a set of methodological principles.

[12] The notion of critic-as-arguer is developed by Wayne Brockriede, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 60 (April 1974), pp. 165-174.

[13] David L. Swanson, "The Requirements of Critical Justification," Communication Monographs, 44 (November 1977), pp. 306-307.

[14] Ibid., pp. 311-313.

[15] The two caveats stated here are adapted from Swanson, p. 313.

[16] Ibid., pp. 309-310.

[17] The idea of deductive versus inductive methods is cited by Campbell and Jamieson and is attributed by them to Charley Conrad, p. 22.

[18] Campbell and Jamieson refer to this method as "touchstone criticism," p. 27.

[19] In addition to such efforts to locate a genus in a group of rhetorical acts, Edwin Black has argued that a genre may have only one identifiable member. Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method, 2d ed. (Madison, Wi.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. 79-91. I am indebted for this reference to Campbell and Jamieson, p. 24.

[20] In a strict sense, one could make a case that this "hypothetical" view is simply a variant of induction. While there is some merit in this argument, the term is warranted here to delineate the open-minded survey approach of many genre critics, eg., James O. Payne, The American Eulogy: A Study in Generic Criticism (M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1975), from the sort of cyclical perspective described in the present study.

[21] Campbell and Jamieson, p. 23.

[22] Ibid., p. 24. This view is also suggested by Roderick P. Hart, "Theory-Building and Rhetorical Criticism: An Informal Statement of Opinion," Central States Speech Journal, 27 (Spring 1976), p. 75.

[23] This notion of evidence as abstraction might seem anathema to the phenomenologically-oriented critic. However, even this type of viewpoint must make some decisions as to what portions of discourse to integrate into its interpretations. As a result, some sort of abstraction must occur, for no critic could hope to appreciate or convey to an audience a holistic account of the entire constructed reality of situated actors. Chances are that even the actors themselves don't grasp the whole of their reality at once.

[24] Campbell and Jamieson, p. 23.

[25] This type of critique is relatively rare in contemporary rhetorical criticism but it's assumptions are still very much with us, as are the problems of rigidity, triviality, and circularity.

[26] This argument is advanced by Campbell and Jamieson, pp. 22-23.

[27] The notion of modifying a generic hypotheses is important in that, even if no genre is located, significant insights into generic issues may still be attained and other, more powerful explanations may be located.

[28] Abraham Kaplan, The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Science (Scranton, Pa.: Chandler), p. 85.

[29] William Righter, Logic and Criticism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 123.

PART III:

GENRE CRITICISM: A TOPICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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